BATMAN.
LEGENDS OF THE
DARK KNIGHT
NO 10 AUG 90
150 CAN 185
Gothic
GRANT MORRISON • KLAUS JANSON
PART FIVE OF FIVE

Gothic
a romance

By Grant Morrison and Klaus Janson

IN FIVE VOLUMES

"The stars move still, time runs,
the clock will strike,
The devil will come,
and Faustus must be damn'd."
DOCTOR FAUSTUS

volume five

Walpurgisnacht

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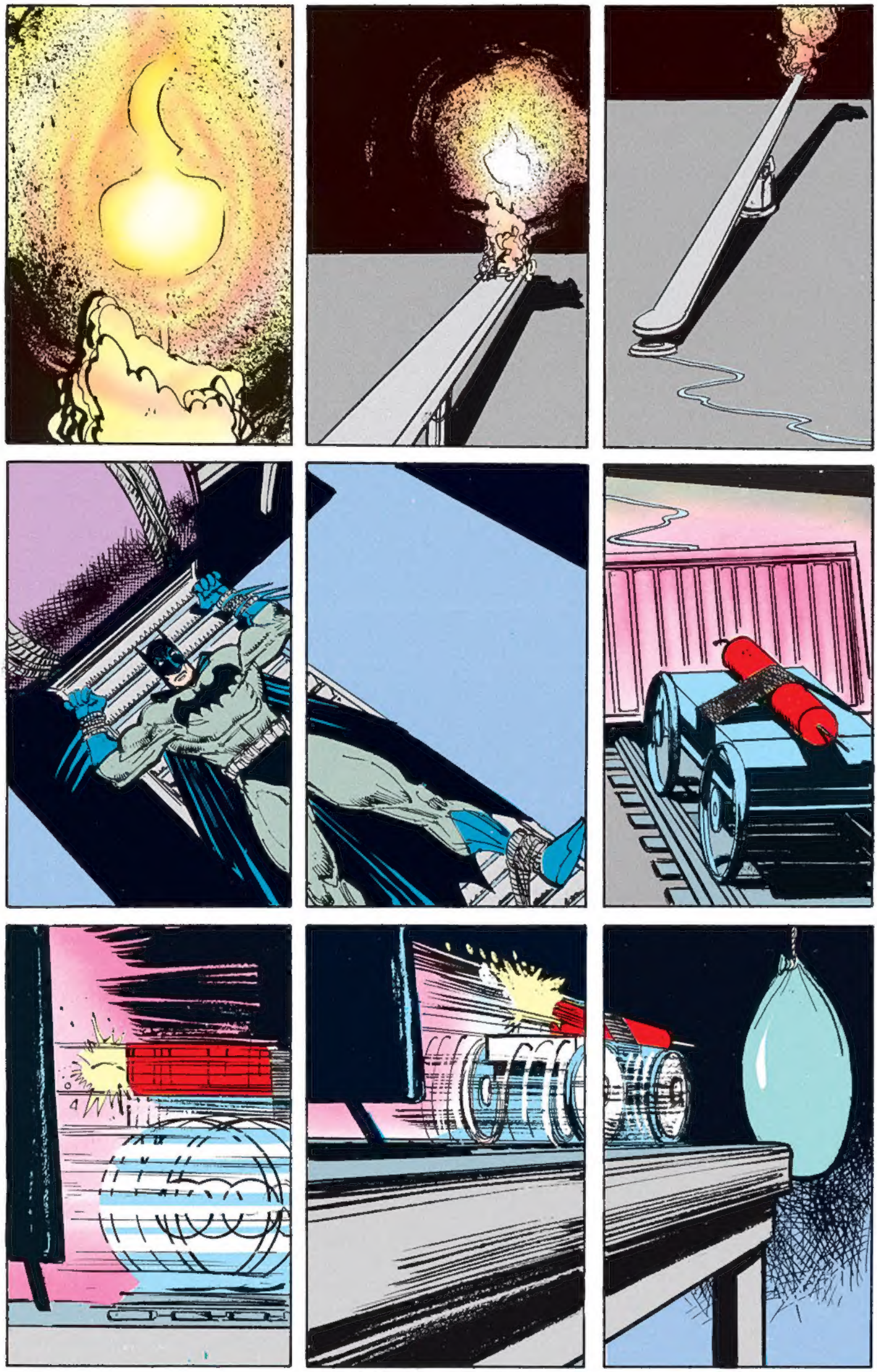
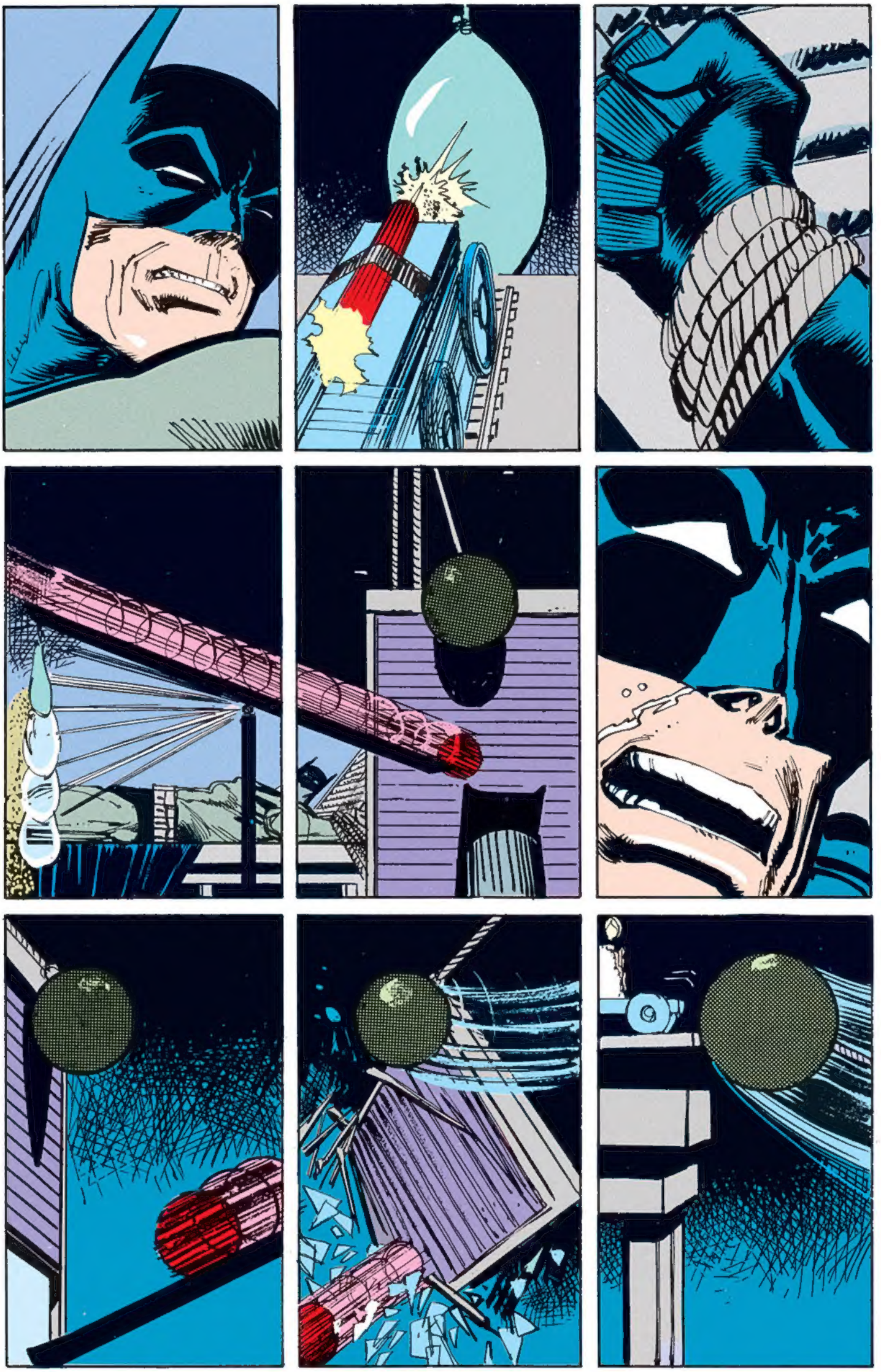
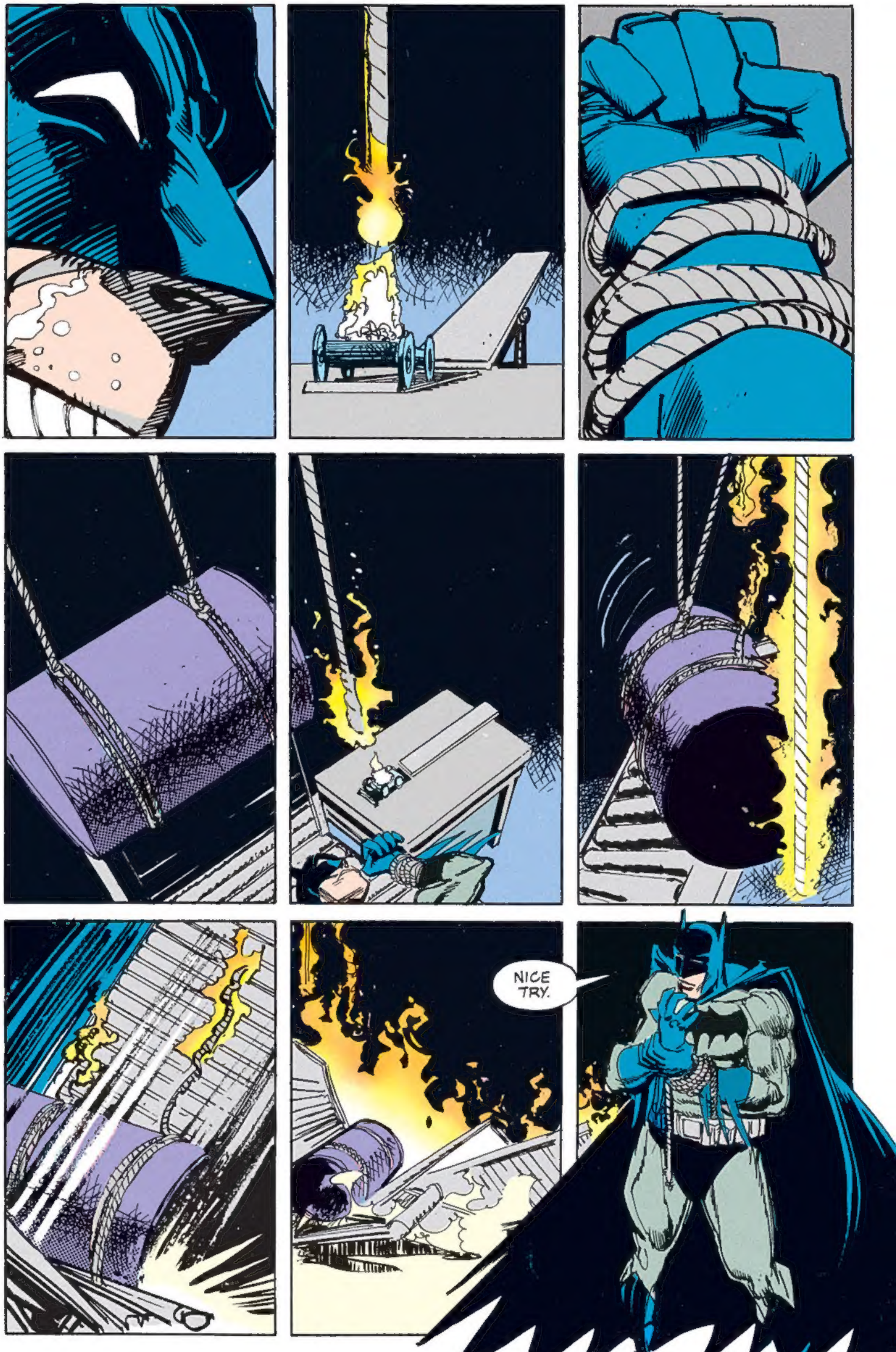
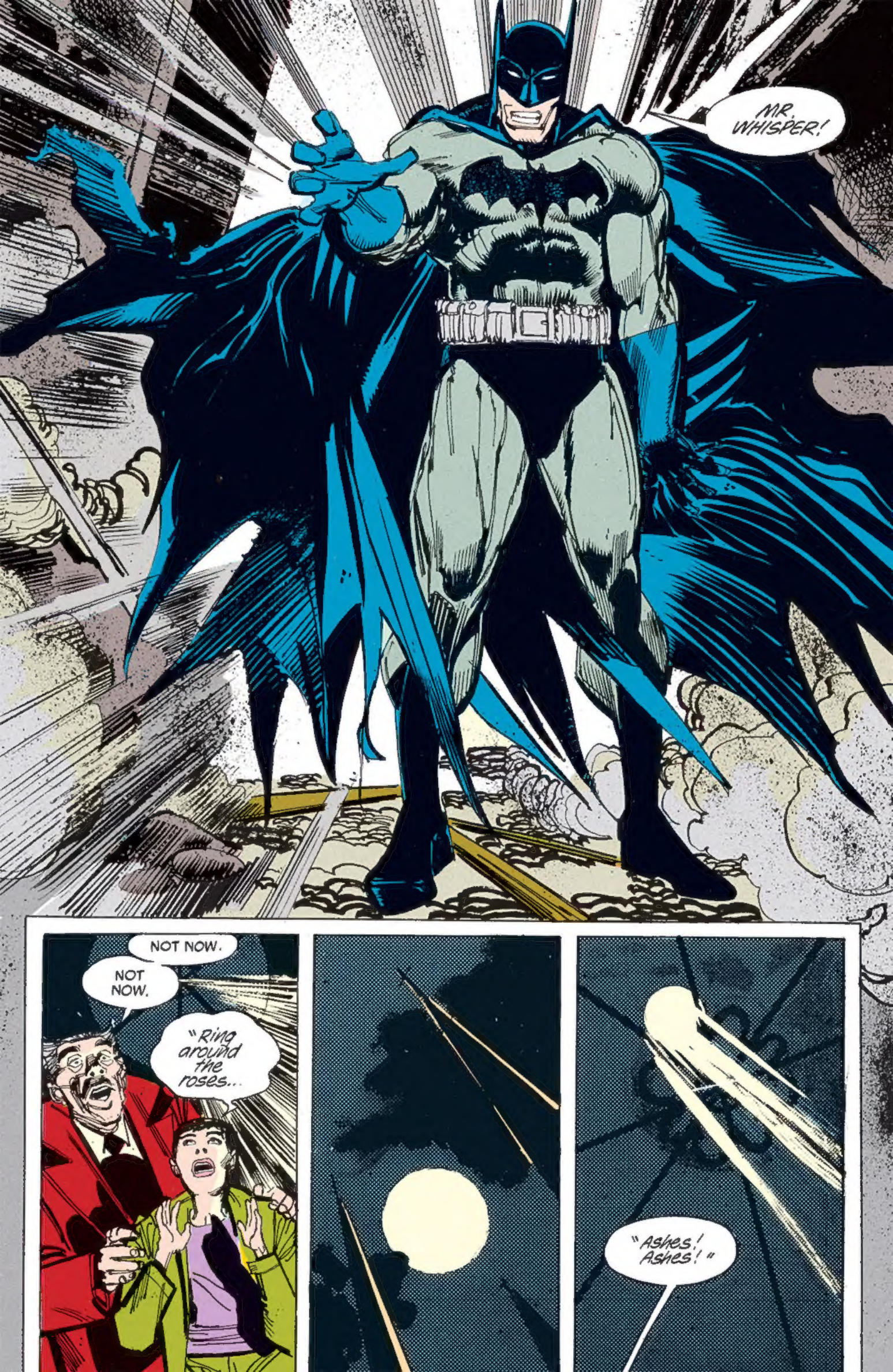


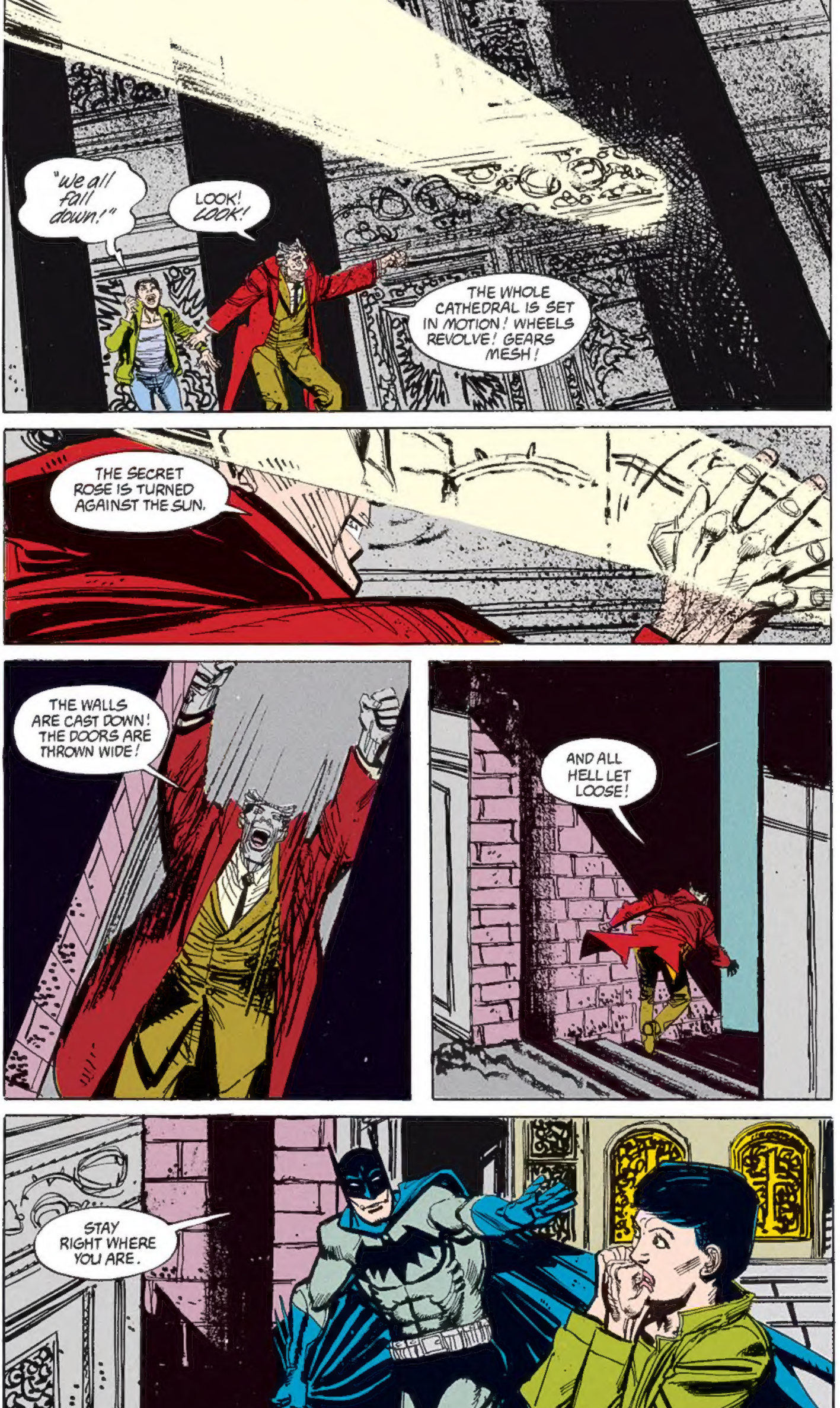



NICE TRY.

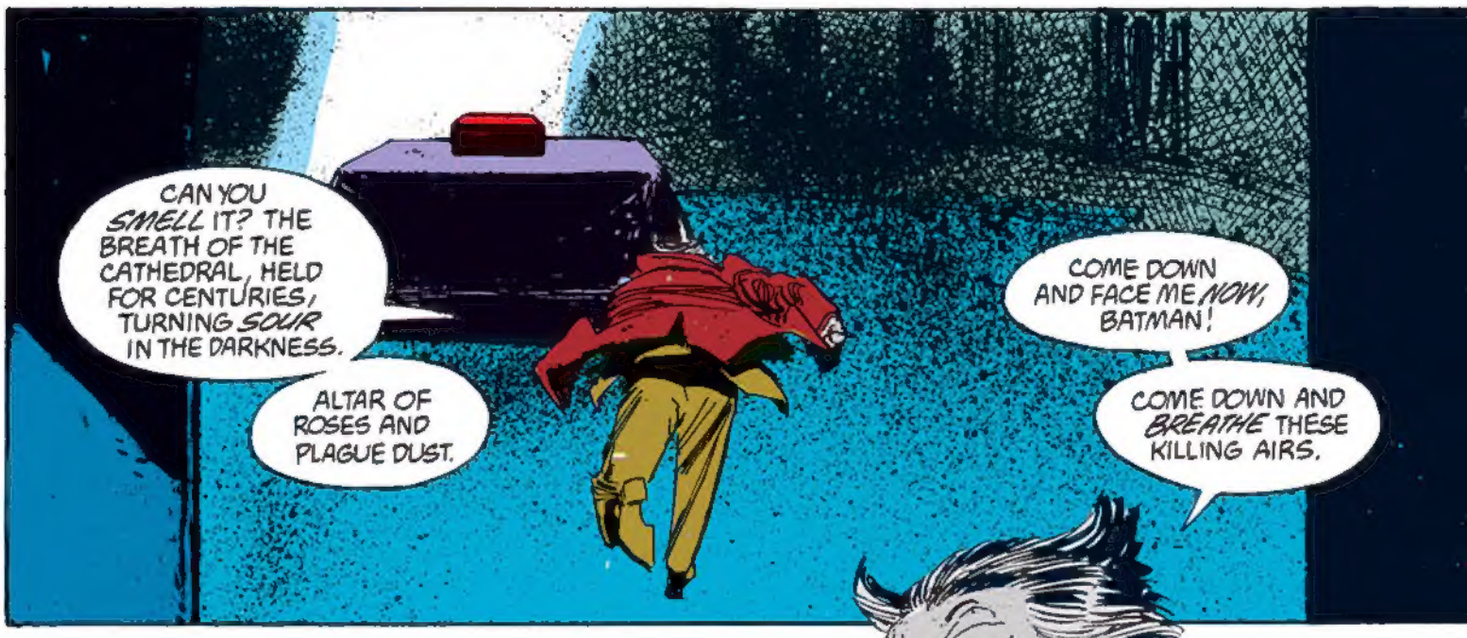
... I BUILT THE CATHEDRAL TO BE A HUGE *SOUNDING CHAMBER*. I IMAGINE IT AS A GIGANTIC *MECHANISM*, AS PRECISE AS ANY *WATCH*.
I HAD THE BUILDING ACROSS THE STREET *DEMOLISHED*.
IT WAS BLOCKING THE *LIGHT*, YOU SEE. IT WAS SPOILING THE EFFECT.
AT PRECISELY *THIRTY* MINUTES TO MIDNIGHT, THE FULL MOON WILL BE MAGNIFIED BY THE CENTRAL PANEL OF THE ROSE WINDOW...
COME ON! AREN'T YOU *INTERESTED*? IN LESS THAN TWENTY-FOUR HOURS, *GOTHAM* WILL BE A *PLAGUE* CITY! A *NECROPOLIS*! DON'T YOU *CARE*?
YOU'RE A STRANGE ONE, LITTLE NUN. WHERE DID YOU *COME* FROM?
WHAT POWER SENT YOU TO ME?

NOW, LOOK! LOOK HERE!
MOONLIGHT WILL STRIKE ONE OF THE ROSES CARVED HERE ON THE ROOD SCREEN. THE SECRET STAIR TO THE CRYPT WILL BE REVEALED...
"Ring around the roses, a pocketful of posies...
YES! YES! THE VICTIMS OF PLAGUE CARRIED ROSES TO DISGUISE THE STENCH OF DEATH.
AND YOU WILL BE MY CARRIER, MY FATAL MESSENGER. YOU WILL BECOME MY ANGEL OF DEATH.
"Ashes! Ashes! We all fall down."
EXACTLY. AND I WILL TRADE THE SOULS OF GOTHAM'S DEAD FOR MY SOUL. LET ME SHOW YOU...
WHAT IS THIS?
"MY HOUR HAS ALMOST COME WHEN I TO SULPH'ROUS AND TORMENTING FLAMES MUST RENDER UP... MYSELF..."
BATMAN PUT THIS HERE. IT MUST HAVE BEEN...
BATMAN.


MR. WHISPER!
NOT NOW.
NOT NOW.
"Ring around the roses...
"Ashes! Ashes!"


"We all fall down!"
LOOK! LOOK!
THE WHOLE CATHEDRAL IS SET IN MOTION! WHEELS REVOLVE! GEARS MESH!
THE SECRET ROSE IS TURNED AGAINST THE SUN.
THE WALLS ARE CAST DOWN! THE DOORS ARE THROWN WIDE!
AND ALL HELL LET LOOSE!
STAY RIGHT WHERE YOU ARE.

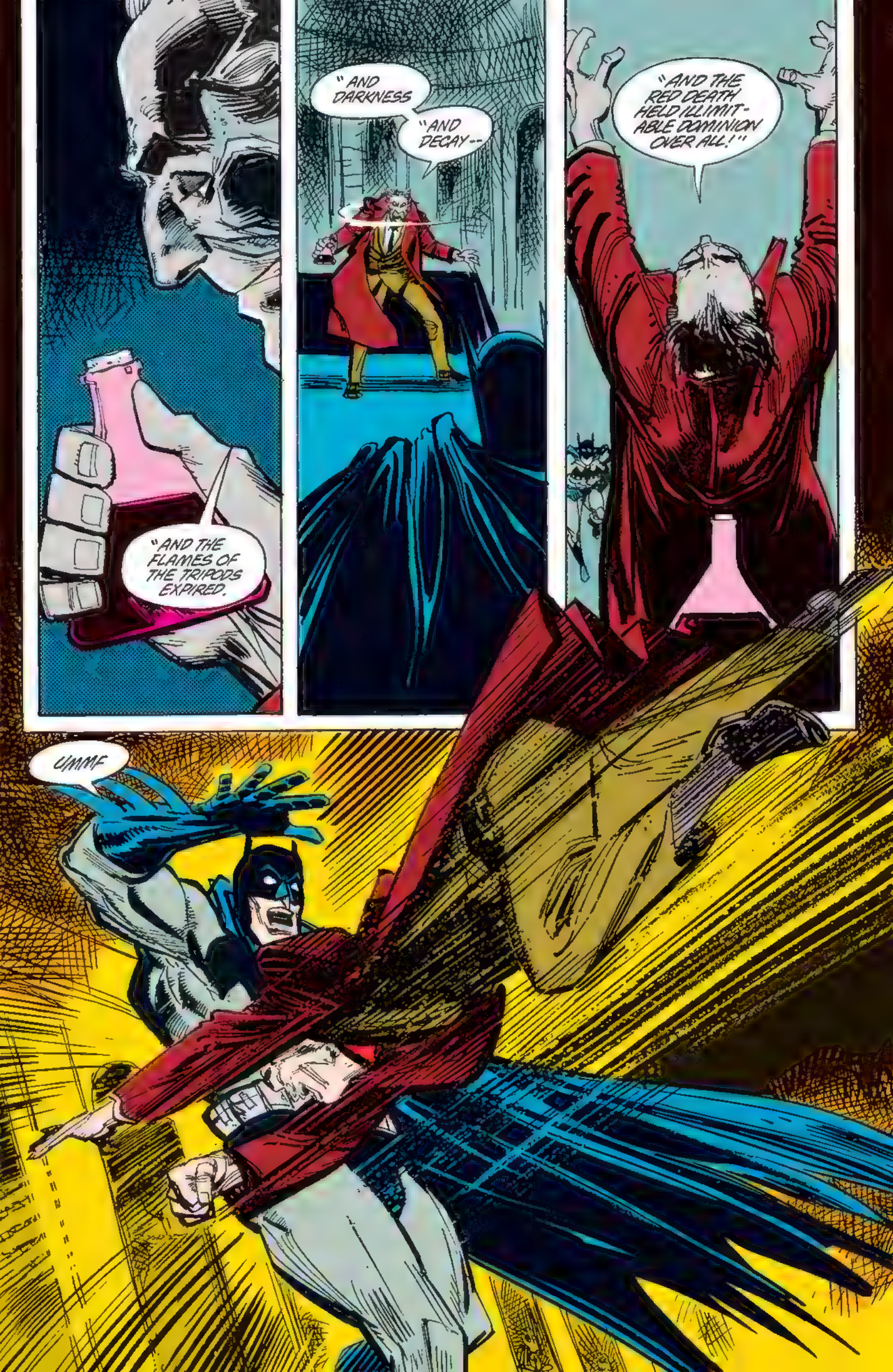
WILL YOU FOLLOW ME NOW?
THIS IS THE PLACE, BATMAN. THIS IS THE ROOM I PREPARED TWO HUNDRED YEARS AGO!
THIS IS THE MOMENT!

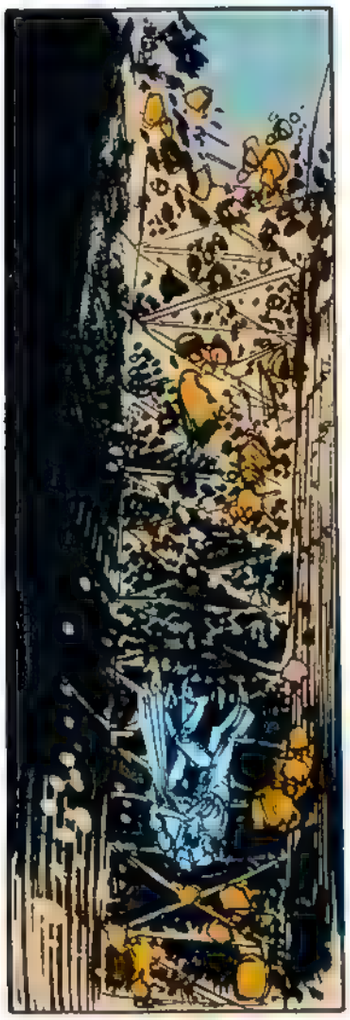

CAN YOU SMELL IT? THE BREATH OF THE CATHEDRAL, HELD FOR CENTURIES, TURNING SOUR IN THE DARKNESS.
ALTAR OF ROSES AND PLAGUE DUST.
COME DOWN AND FACE ME NOW, BATMAN!
COME DOWN AND BREATHE THESE KILLING AIRS.

WILL YOU?

I DON'T THINK SO.

...I...

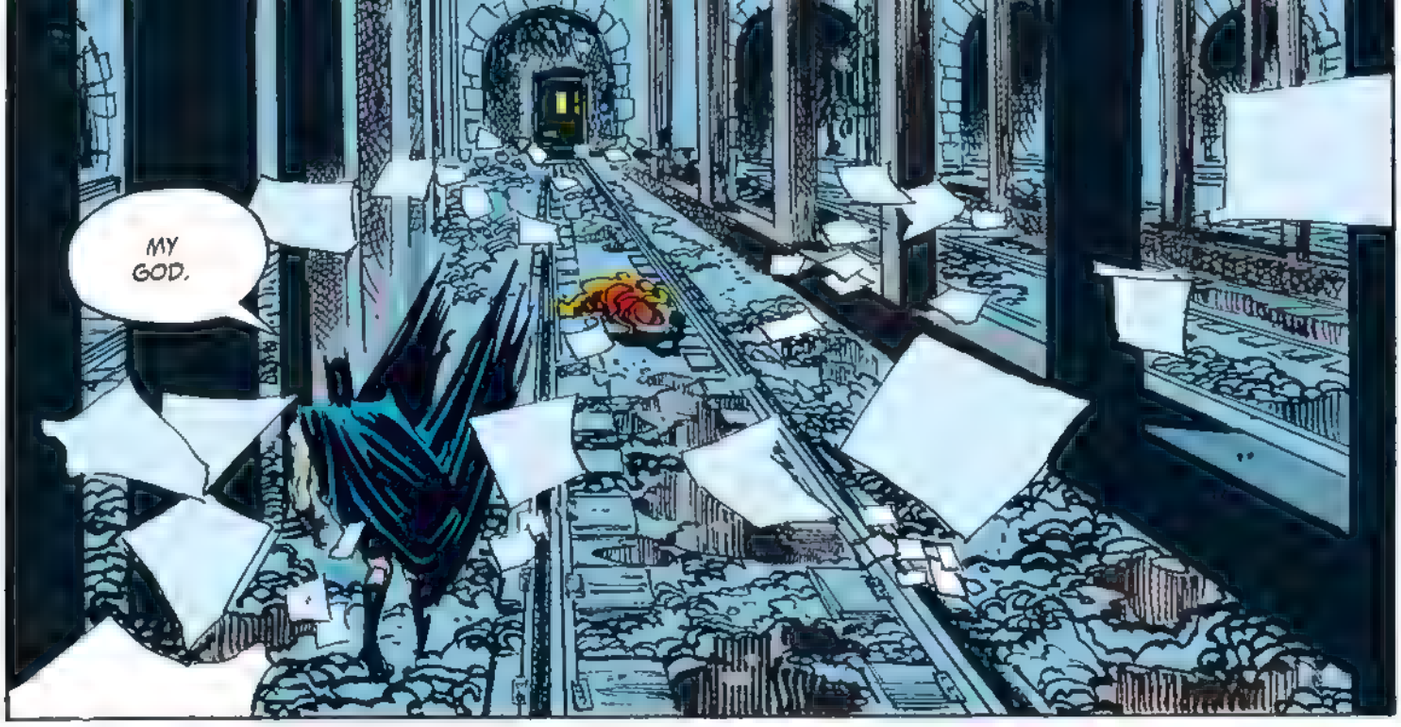

"AND THE FLAMES OF THE TRIPODS EXPIRED.
"AND DARKNESS
"AND DECAY--
"AND THE RED DEATH HELD ILLIMITABLE DOMINION OVER ALL!"
UMMF

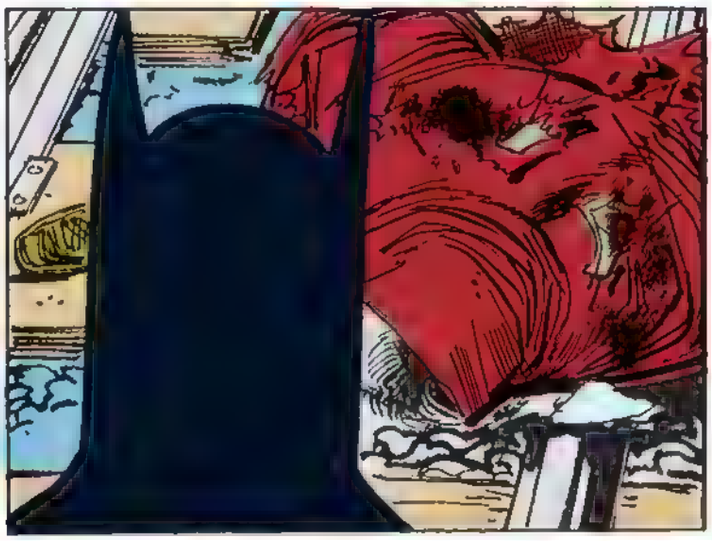


UFF

THE BELL WILL STRIKE, BATMAN! THE BELL WILL STRIKE AND THE CRYPT WILL MAGNIFY THE BELL'S TONE.
THE PHIAL WILL SHATTER!

YOU'VE LOST!
YOU'VE LOST EVERYTHING!
AND...
AH.


MY GOD.



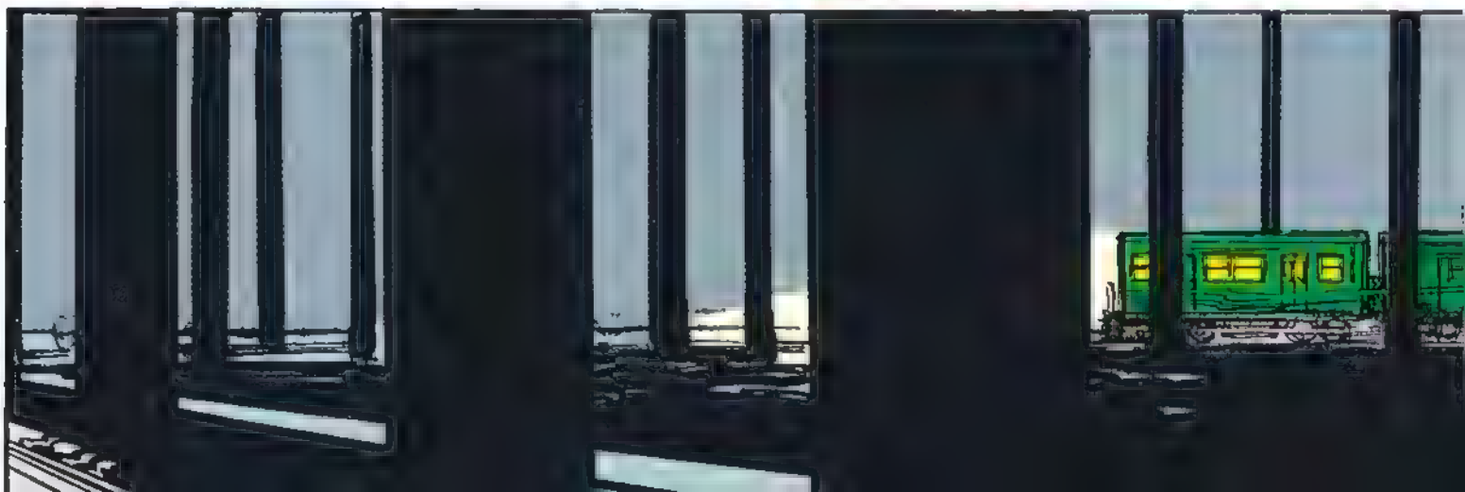
AAH!

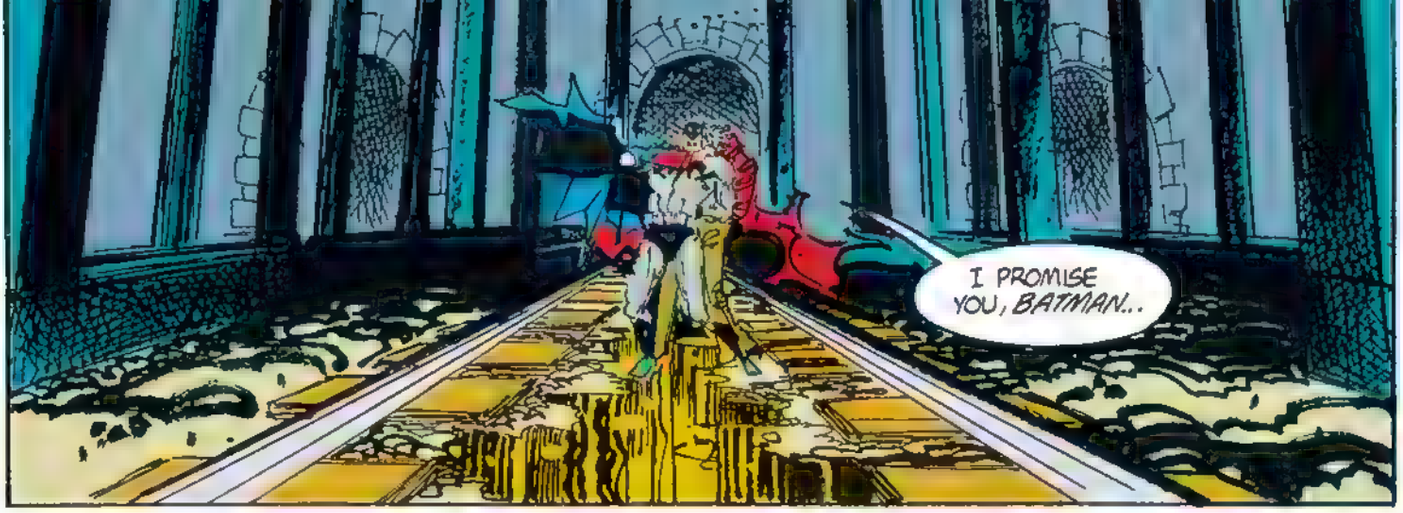
"THOU WAST NOT BORN FOR DEATH, IMMORTAL BIRD."
YOUR ARM FIRST.
RRAAAAGH!
NNGGH
UTTT

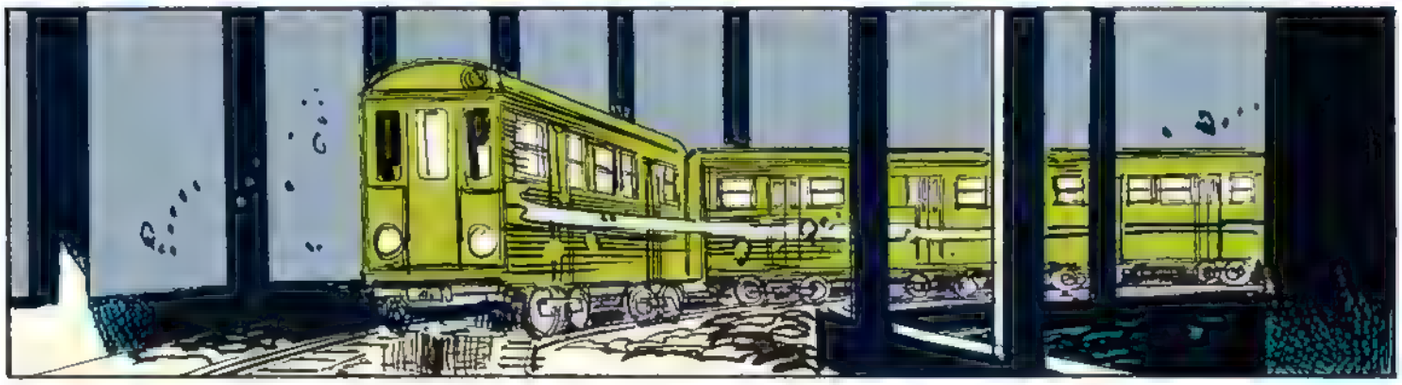
NNNEEEAA!
HUKK!
BASTARD!
BASTARD! YOU...

IT DOESN'T MATTER. YOU'RE TOO LATE.
IT DOESN'T MATTER.

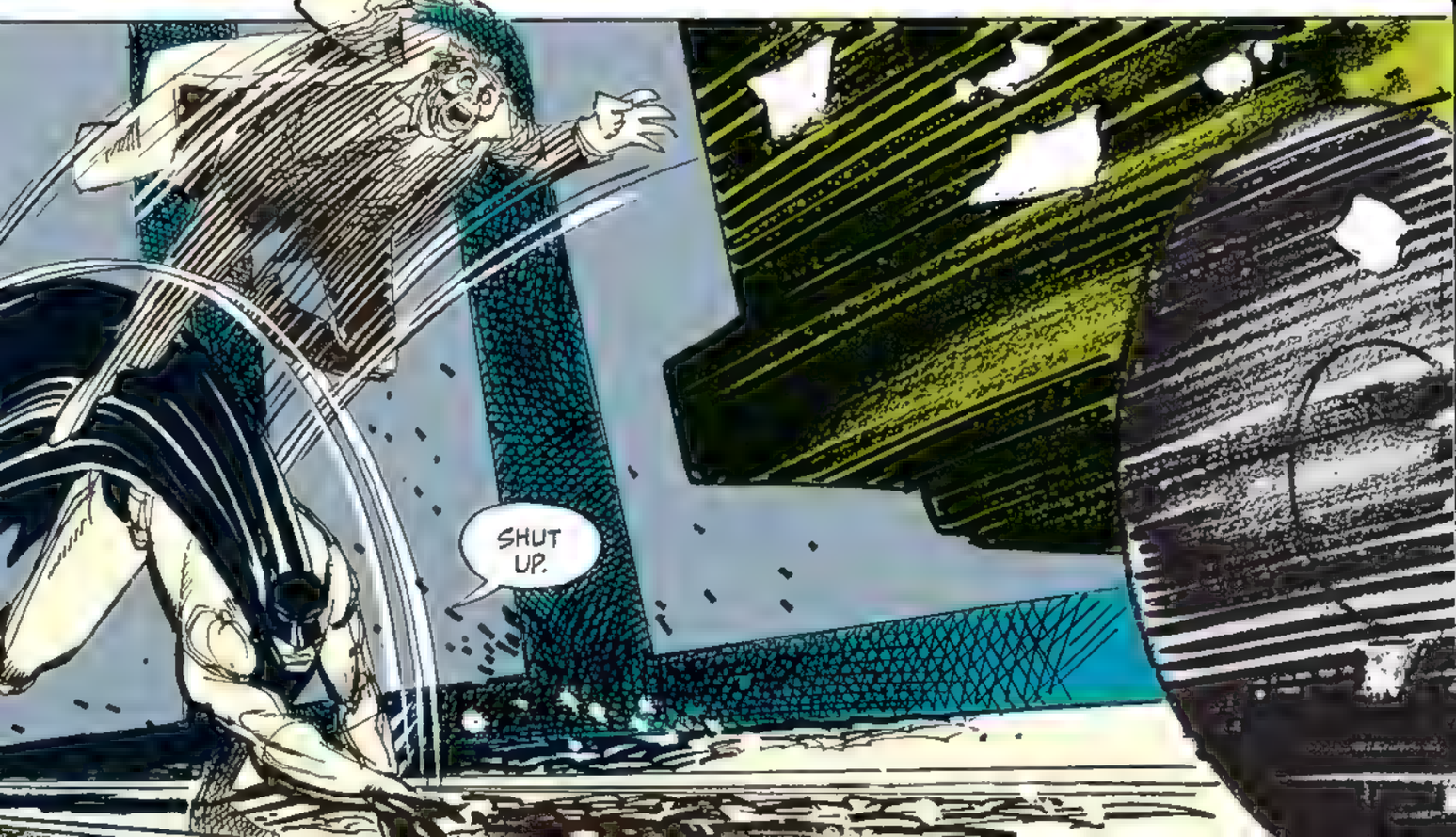
LET'S STAY TOGETHER, YOU AND I, HERE ON THIS TRACK.

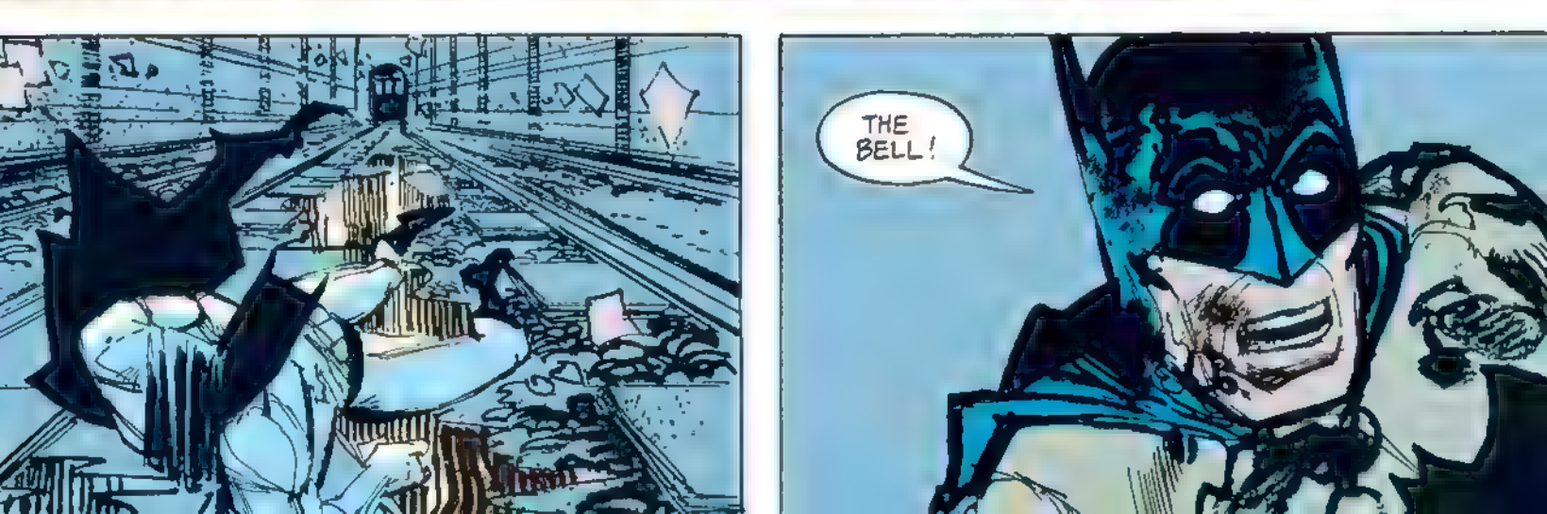



I PROMISE YOU, BATMAN..

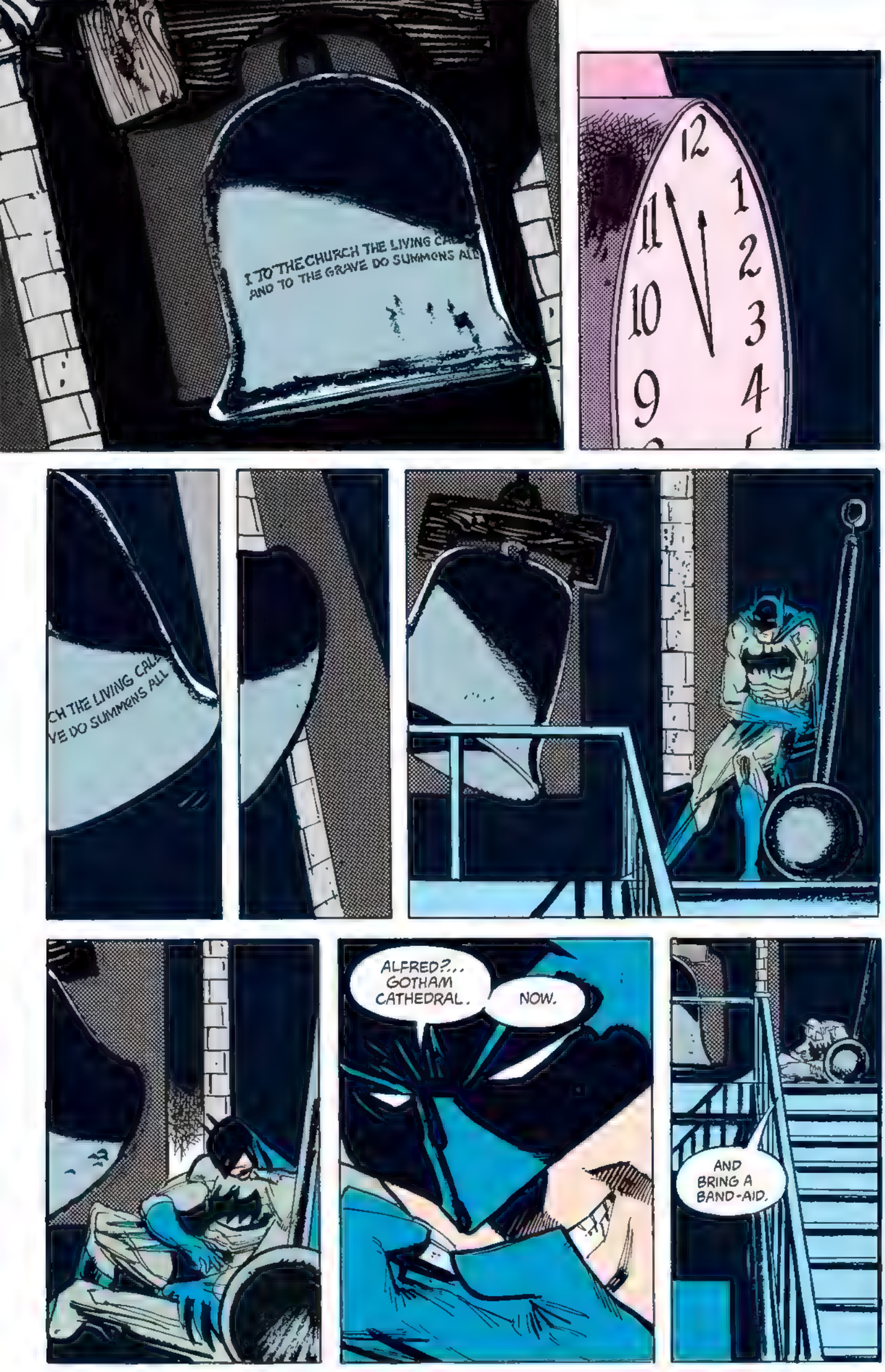


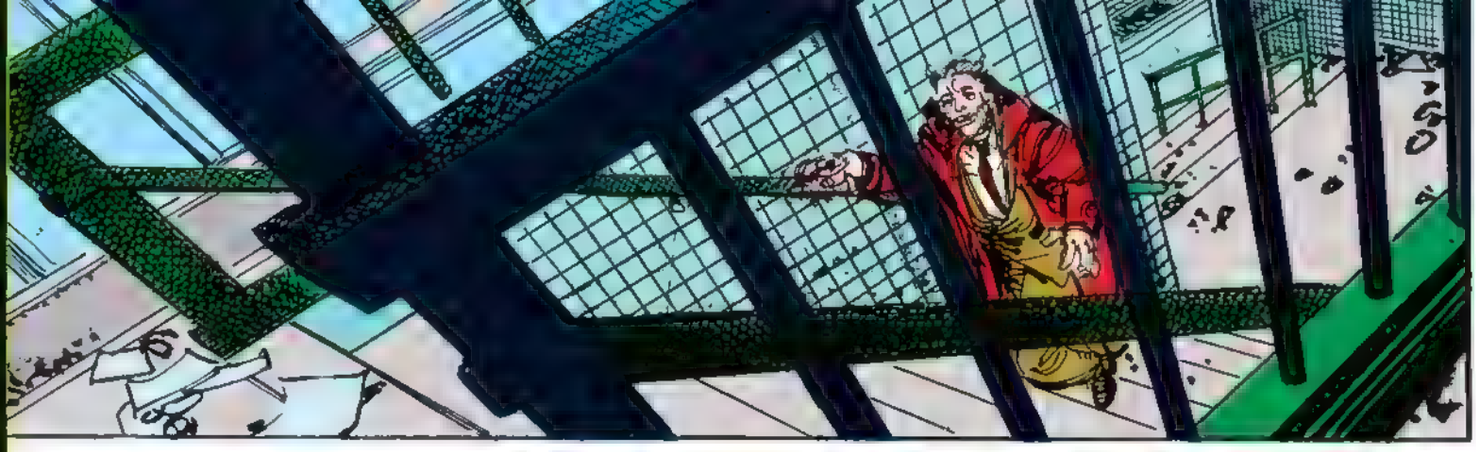
...THIS WILL HURT YOU MORE THAN IT HURTS ME.
WHISPER...

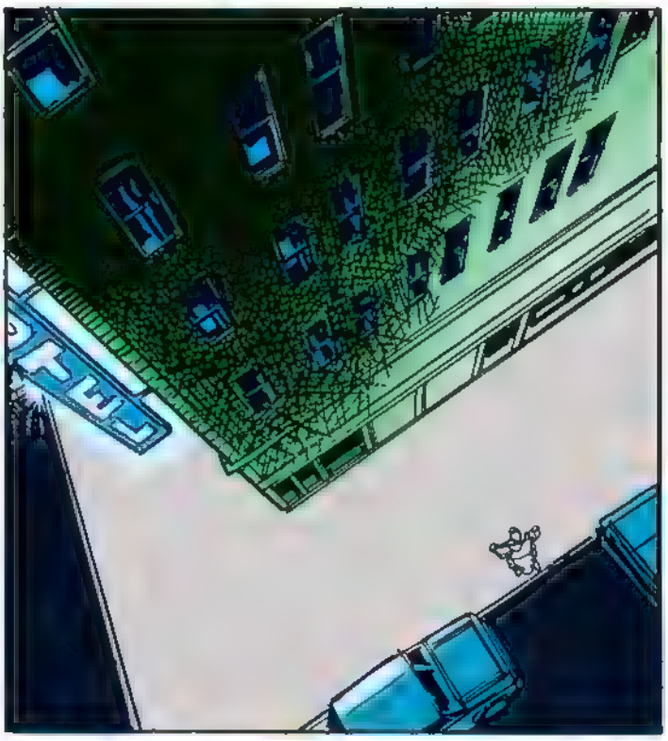

SHUT UP.

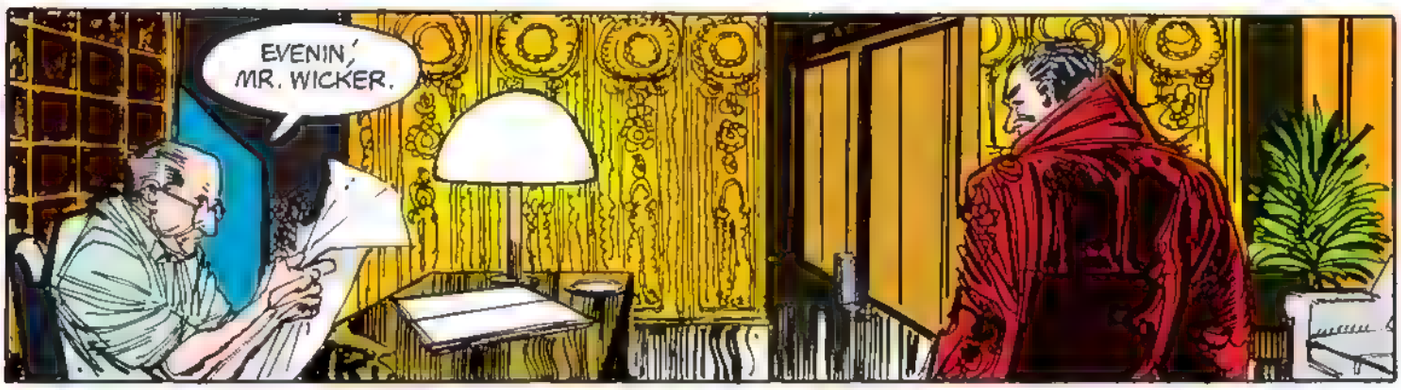


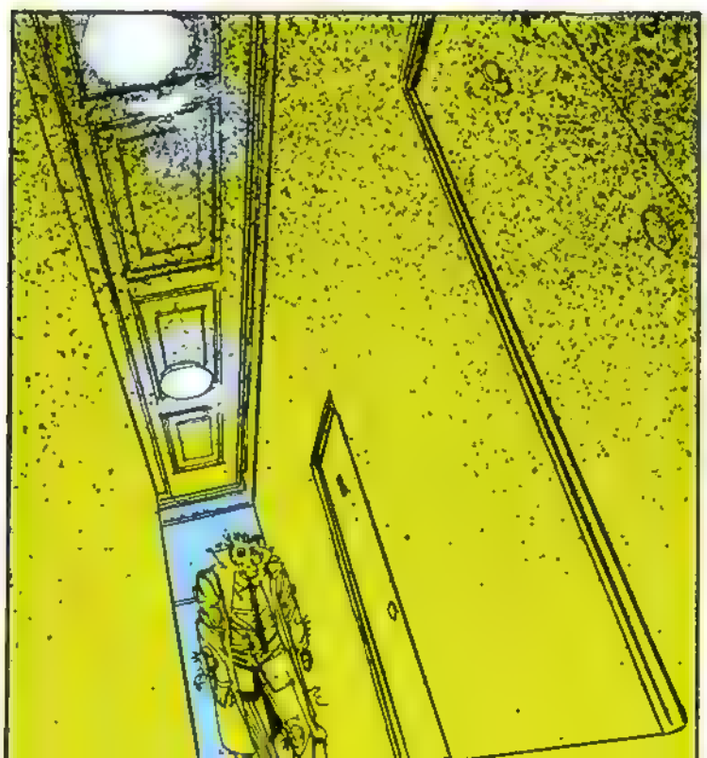
THE BELL!


I TO THE CHURCH THE LIVING CA
AND TO THE GRAVE DO SUMMONS ALL
12
1
2
3
4
10
9
CH THE LIVING CAL
VE DO SUMMONS ALL
ALFRED?... GOTHAM CATHEDRAL.
NOW.
AND BRING A BAND-AID.

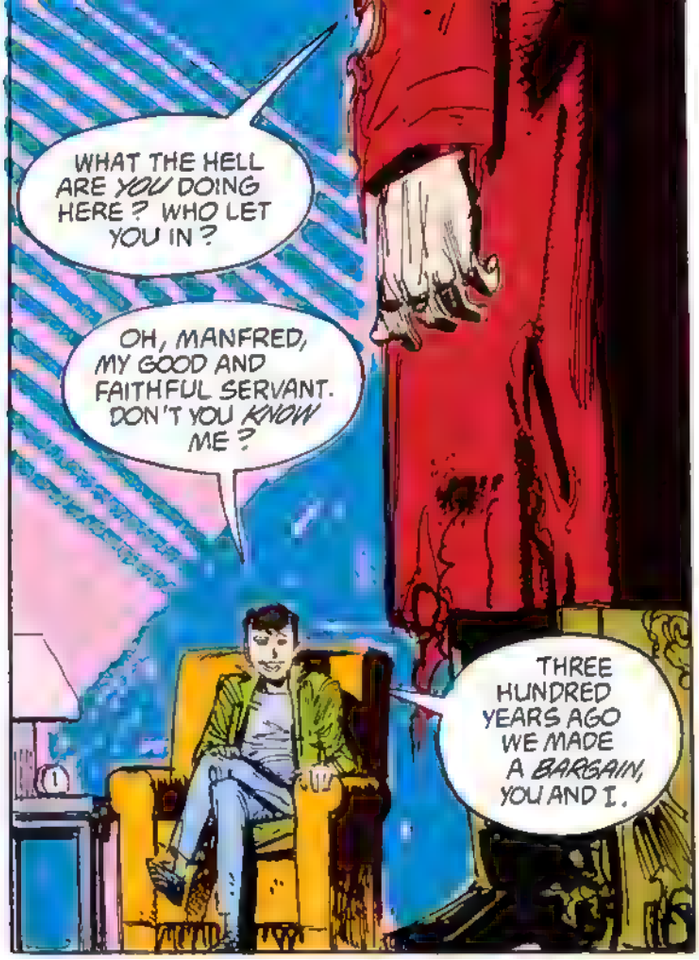


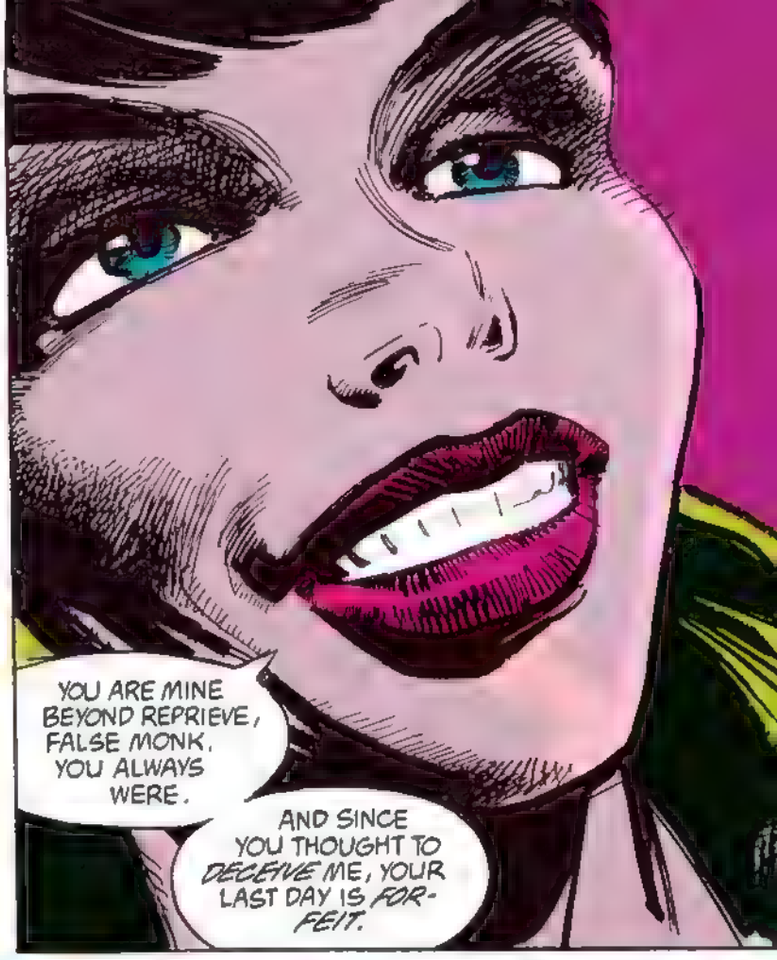



EVENIN', MR. WICKER.



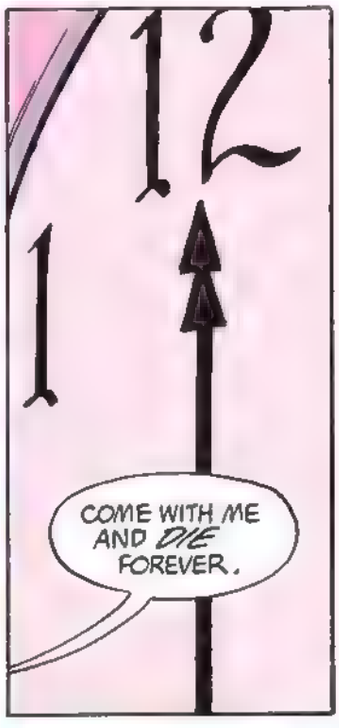
COME IN, MANFRED.
I'VE BEEN WAITING.


WHAT THE HELL ARE *YOU* DOING HERE? WHO LET YOU IN?
OH, MANFRED, MY GOOD AND FAITHFUL SERVANT. DON'T YOU *KNOW* ME?
THREE HUNDRED YEARS AGO WE MADE A *BARGAIN*, YOU AND I.

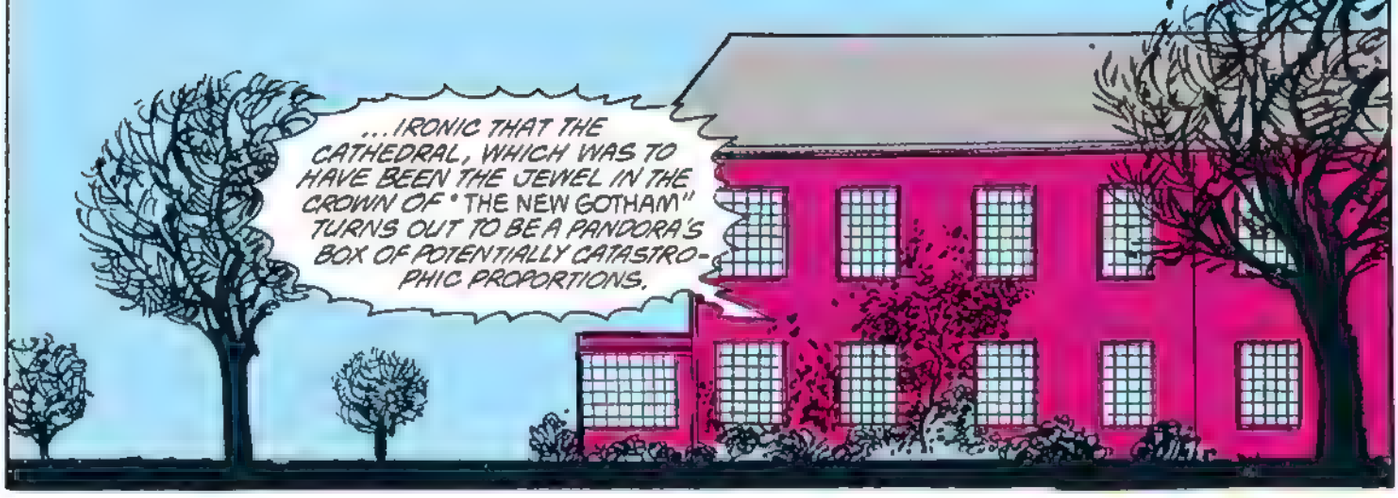

YOU ARE MINE BEYOND REPRIEVE, FALSE MONK. YOU ALWAYS WERE.
AND SINCE YOU THOUGHT TO *DECEIVE* ME, YOUR LAST DAY IS *FORFEIT*.

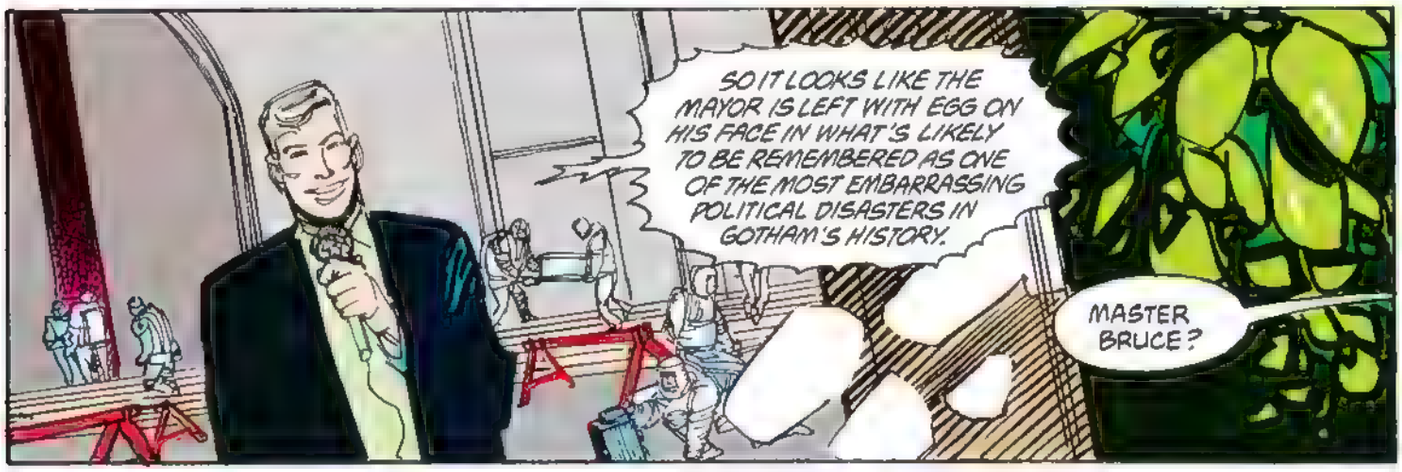
THE HOUR HAS ARRIVED WHEN YOU QUIT THIS WORLD FOR THE FIRES OF EVERLASTING *PAIN*.

NO.
OH NO.
CHRIST, SAVE ME! FORGIVE ME MY SINS AND LET ME LIVE FOREVER!
YOU WOULD CALL ON HEAVEN NOW? HYPOCRITE!
RESIGN ALL HOPE OF PARDON.


COME WITH ME AND *DIE* FOREVER.

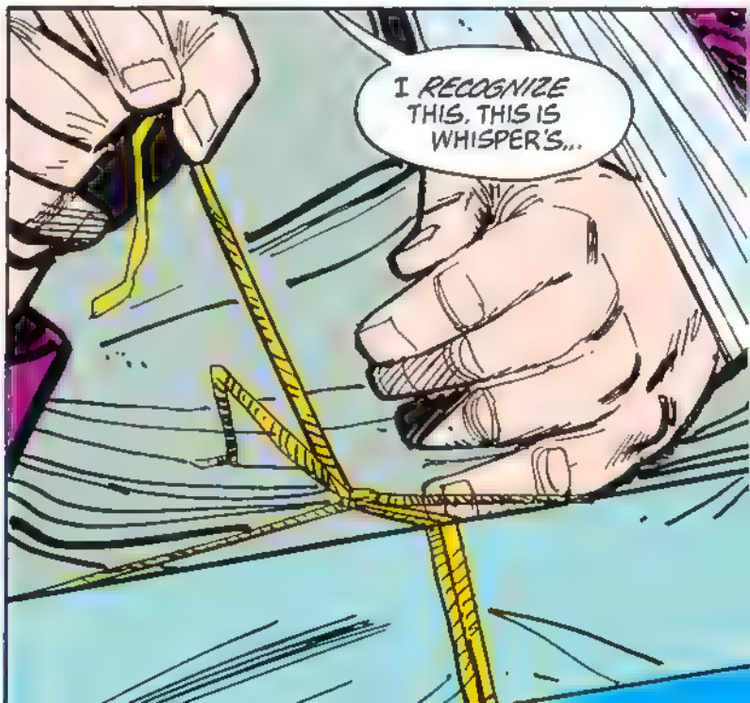
NOOO


...IRONIC THAT THE CATHEDRAL, WHICH WAS TO HAVE BEEN THE JEWEL IN THE CROWN OF "THE NEW GOTHAM" TURNS OUT TO BE A PANDORA'S BOX OF POTENTIALLY CATASTROPHIC PROPORTIONS.

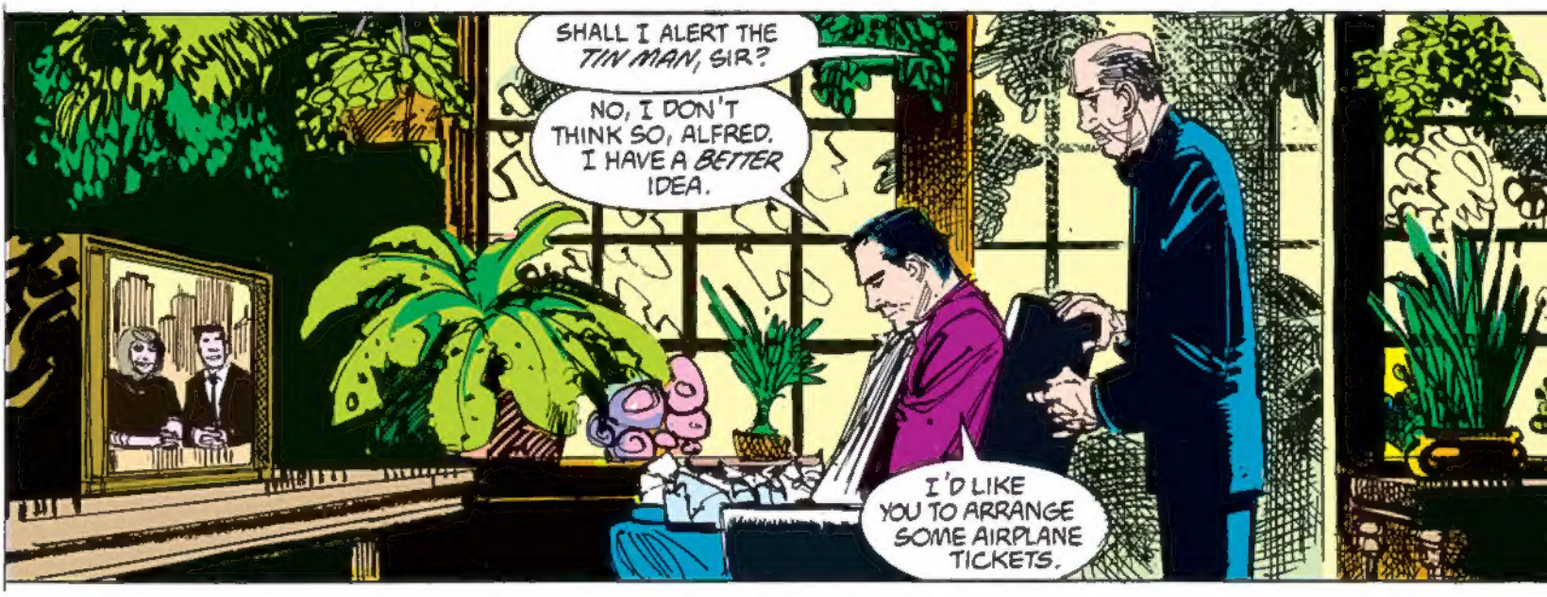

SO IT LOOKS LIKE THE MAYOR IS LEFT WITH EGG ON HIS FACE IN WHAT'S LIKELY TO BE REMEMBERED AS ONE OF THE MOST EMBARRASSING POLITICAL DISASTERS IN GOTHAM'S HISTORY.
MASTER BRUCE?

MASTER BRUCE, THIS PACKAGE ARRIVED WITH THIS MORNING'S MAIL.
I'VE RUN THE CUSTOMARY CHECKS AND IT SEEMS INNOCENT ENOUGH -- BUT THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT IT...

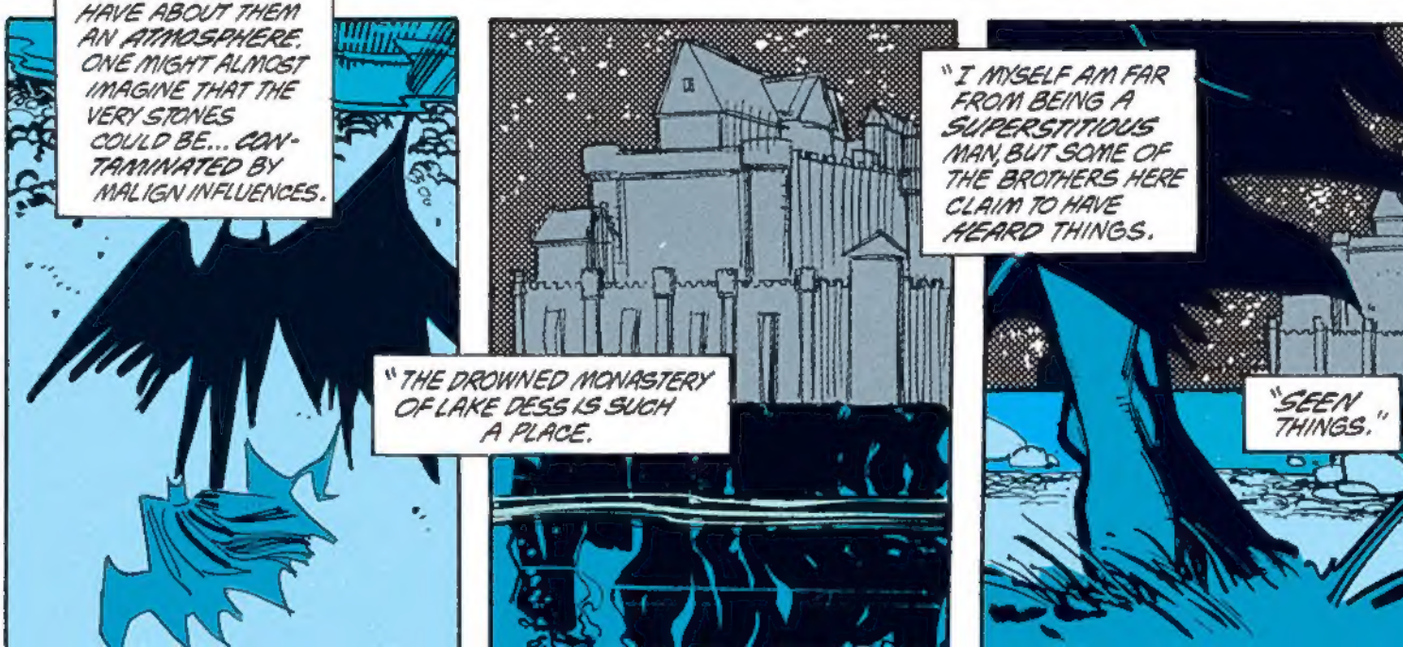
OKAY, I'LL TAKE A LOOK.
WAIT A MINUTE: I'VE SEEN THIS BEFORE, THIS STRANGE CORD.

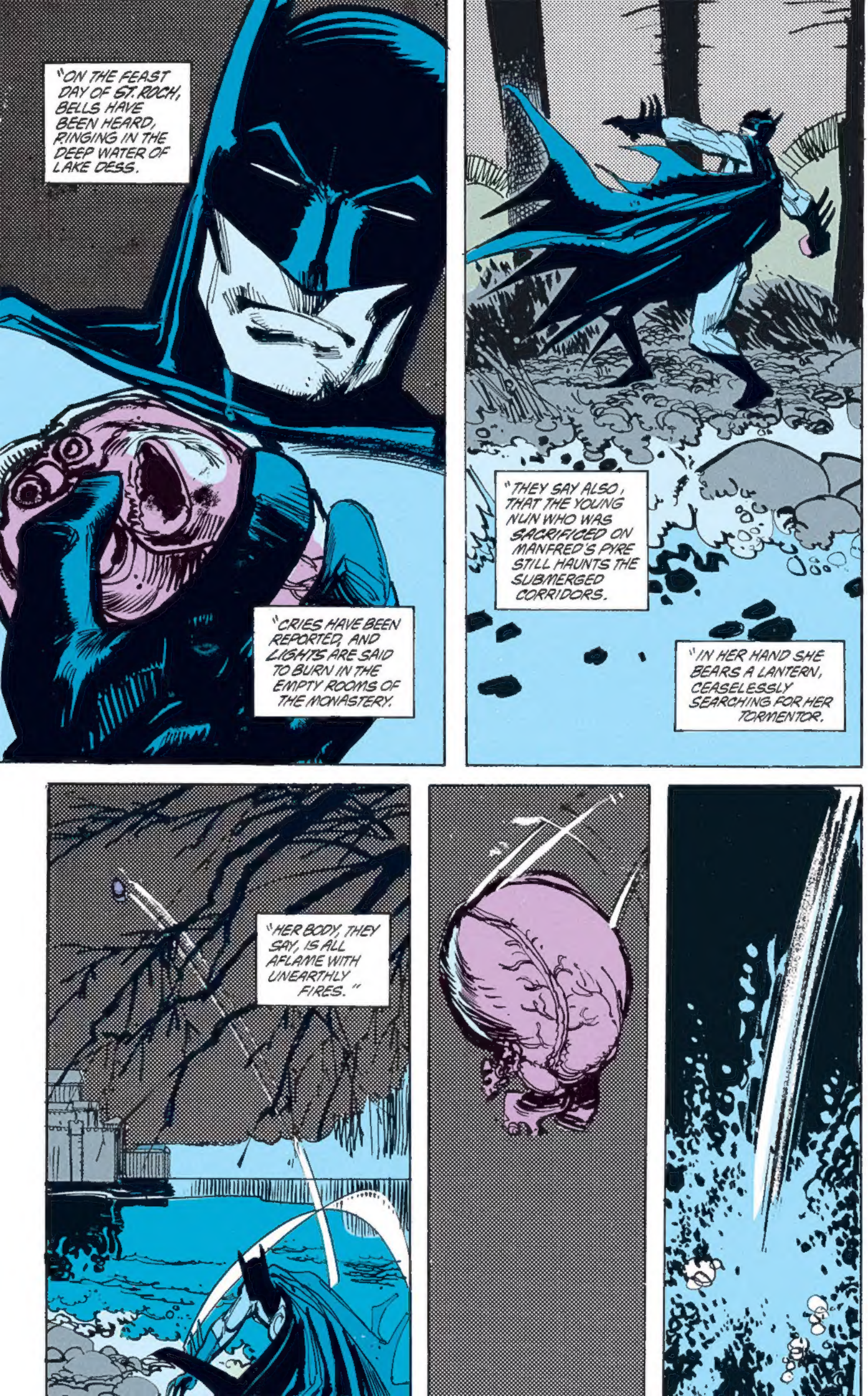

I RECOGNIZE THIS, THIS IS WHISPER'S...

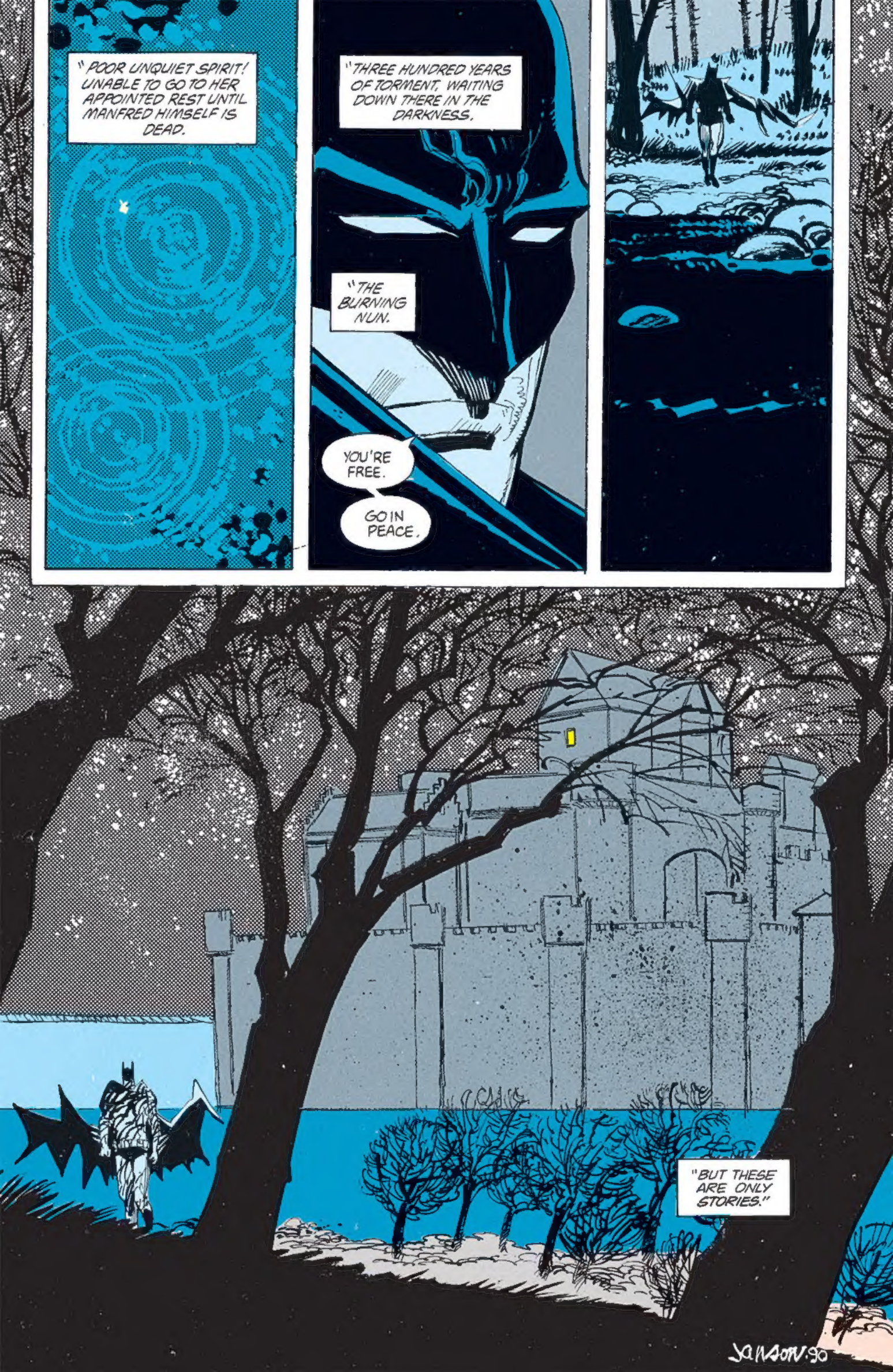
OH.


SHALL I ALERT THE TIN MAN, SIR?
NO, I DON'T THINK SO, ALFRED. I HAVE A BETTER IDEA.
I'D LIKE YOU TO ARRANGE SOME AIRPLANE TICKETS.

"BATMAN, THERE IS MORE.
"LIKE ALL STORIES, THIS ONE HAS NOT YET COME TO AN END..


"CERTAIN PLACES HAVE ABOUT THEM AN ATMOSPHERE. ONE MIGHT ALMOST IMAGINE THAT THE VERY STONES COULD BE... CONTAMINATED BY MALIGN INFLUENCES.
"THE DROWNED MONASTERY OF LAKE DESS IS SUCH A PLACE.
"I MYSELF AM FAR FROM BEING A SUPERSTITIOUS MAN, BUT SOME OF THE BROTHERS HERE CLAIM TO HAVE HEARD THINGS.
"SEEN THINGS."


"ON THE FEAST DAY OF ST. ROCH, BELLS HAVE BEEN HEARD, RINGING IN THE DEEP WATER OF LAKE DESS.
"CRIES HAVE BEEN REPORTED, AND LIGHTS ARE SAID TO BURN IN THE EMPTY ROOMS OF THE MONASTERY.
"THEY SAY ALSO, THAT THE YOUNG NUN WHO WAS SACRIFICED ON MANFRED'S PYRE STILL HAUNTS THE SUBMERGED CORRIDORS.
"IN HER HAND SHE BEARS A LANTERN, CEASELESSLY SEARCHING FOR HER TORMENTOR.
"HER BODY, THEY SAY, IS ALL AFLAME WITH UNEARTHLY FIRES."


"POOR UNQUIET SPIRIT! UNABLE TO GO TO HER APPOINTED REST UNTIL MANFRED HIMSELF IS DEAD.
"THREE HUNDRED YEARS OF TORMENT, WAITING DOWN THERE IN THE DARKNESS.
"THE BURNING NUN.
YOU'RE FREE.
GO IN PEACE.
"BUT THESE ARE ONLY STORIES."
JANSON '90

MONARCH